

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- (1) A container which comprises: a blow molded plastic container having a circular base, a cylindrical sidewall projecting upwardly from said base, a neck finish projecting upwardly from said sidewall and having an opening to the inside of the container; wherein the neck finish includes an inwardly oriented stepped area adjacent said opening.
- (2) A container according to Claim 1, wherein said stepped area includes an upper, outwardly extending flange which borders on the opening.
- (3) A container according to Claim 2, wherein said upper flange extends outwardly beyond the outward extension of the neck finish.
- (4) A container according to Claim 3, wherein said neck finish includes: said upper, outwardly extending flange having an outer surface and an inner surface; a downwardly extending flange extending downwardly from the inner surface of the outwardly extending flange and having an upper portion connected to the inner surface of the outwardly extending flange, and a lower portion opposed to the upper portion; and a lower, inwardly

extending flange connected to the lower portion of the downwardly extending flange and extending inwardly of said downwardly extending flange.

- (5) A container according to Claim 4, wherein the inside surface of the inwardly extending flange includes an inward projection.
- (6) A container according to Claim 5, wherein said inward projection is button-like.
- (7) A container according to Claim 1, wherein the sidewall includes a plurality of spaced apart, continuous, circumferential grooves extending around the sidewall.
- (8) A container according to Claim 7, wherein said grooves are separated by raised areas.

- (9) A container according to Claim 7, including a shoulder area at the upper end of the sidewall between the uppermost circumferential groove and the neck finish.
- (10) A container according to Claim 7, including a first label mounting flat area above the uppermost circumferential groove and a second label mounting flat area below the lowermost circumferential groove.
- (11) A container according to Claim 1, wherein said opening is covered by a foil covering.
- (12) A container according to Claim 1, wherein said opening is covered by a cap.
- (13) A container according to Claim 7, including at least five of said spaced apart grooves.
- (14) A container according to Claim 1, wherein the base includes a plurality of outwardly extending struts and a central recessed area.

- (15) A preform for forming a blow molded container, which comprises: a base, a cylindrical sidewall projecting upwardly from the base, a neck finish projecting upwardly from the sidewall and having an opening to the inside of the preform; wherein the neck finish includes an inwardly oriented stepped area adjacent said opening.
- (16) A preform according to Claim 15, wherein said stepped area includes an upper, outwardly extending flange which borders on the opening.
- (17) A preform according to Claim 16, wherein said upper flange extends outwardly beyond the outward extension of the neck finish.
- (18) A preform according to Claim 17, wherein said neck finish includes: said upper, outwardly extending flange having an outer surface and an inner surface; a downwardly extending flange extending downwardly from the inner surface of the outwardly extending flange and having an upper portion connected to the inner surface of the outwardly extending flange and a lower portion opposed to the upper portion; and a lower, inwardly extending flange connected to the lower portion of the downwardly extending flange and extending inwardly of said downwardly extending flange.

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- (19) A preform according to Claim 18, wherein the inside surface of the inwardly extending flange includes an inward projection.
- (20) A preform according to Claim 19, wherein said inward projection is bolton-like.
- (21) A preform according to Claim 15, wherein the sidewall is substantially straight and projects inwardly of said neck finish.
- (22) A preform according to Claim 15, wherein in cross-section the base is semi-circular.